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Meeting Minutes, April 2004

National Smokejumper Association Board of Directors

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National Smokejumper Association
Summary of the EXCOM Meeting
April 17, 2004, Tukwilla Washington

Attendees:

Roland Stoleson, President
Chuck Sheley, 1st Vice President
Doug Houston, 2nd Vice President
Larry Lufkin, Immediate Past President
Dave Bennett, Secretary
Bill Moody, Director and History Chairman

Joe Stutler, Member
Karl Maerzluft, Member
John Helmer, Member
Dean Longanecker, Treasurer
Fred Cooper Membership
Fred Rohrbach, Director

OLD BUSINESS

NSA trademark registration-Fred Rohrbach

Progress continues in the registration process. Board members are not enthusiastic about use of the NSA logo for purposes other than direct recognition of the NSA. Ron Stoleson suggests that we need a policy on how we will allocate use of trademark.

Treasurer's report- Dean Longanecker

The NSA fiscal year ends on 30 June. The organization is staying basically even on finances, however, we are eating into income in the current period that has been allocated for use in future periods. **We will have make hard decisions on what we will spend money in the future.** Flexibility to add projects is diminished. "Don't spend money on project that aren't budgeted". Interest rates are very low; which doesn't help. Ron Stoleson asks if a less conservative investment strategy would help. Answer is: that would help somewhat but would not solve the problem. John Helmer asked if a portion could be invested in equities. (John is an investment councilor). Fred Cooper suggests a balanced portfolio. John Helmer said investments might be more aggressively managed. Part of assets could be invested in equities but this should be approached very cautiously.

Fred Rohrbach suggests that we look at several avenues to increase revenue:

- Increase membership dues
- Evergreen Museum merchandise sales.

Larry Lufkin said dues increase would only hit single year paying members immediately of which there are only about 140.

Tom Uphill, with his assignment for long range planning should be involved.

Financial priorities should be to protect the magazine and exhibit at Evergreen.

Dean Longanecker said we are responding to many ad hoc requests that are breaking the bank.

Chuck Sheley said that the NSA fails to live within established budgets for each activity. For instance, Trails has over-extended from agreed budgets. Agreement for Trails was \$1200, but actual cost was \$1900, and over \$2000 this year. Nothing in the above discussion is intended as negative toward these programs.

Bill Moody suggested that Ron Stoleson discuss with Jon McBride and other program managers the need to live within the agreed budgets.

Dave Bennett suggested that we do a financial forecast based on several alternative investment/revenue strategies. This would require some spreadsheet work to game the options.

Ron Stoleson suggested that a committee be formed to develop a financial approach for the full board meeting to consider in June at MSO. Larry Lufkin will prepare a spreadsheet on impacts of membership dues changes. Fred Cooper will be prepared to make a recommendation on membership dues at the June meeting.

Dean Longanecker pointed out that on the second page of financial handout, two magazines appear in one accounting period which shows abnormal costs, also, **included there are Chuck Sheley's stipend and website costs.** Merchandise has generated enough to pay for the magazine.

We are paying Museum of Mountain Flying (MMF) \$1200 per year which is really a donation to the Museum, however we are storing some office equipment there.

Dean Longanecker will extract cost data from previous years, and prepare framework for drafting a budget for the June meeting. Doug Houston will evaluate the impact of long-term commitments such as the MMF yearly storage fee.

Dean Longanecker made the commitment to have the new double-entry bookkeeping system in place by the June meeting.

Membership report-Fred Cooper

Details of the membership parameters are supplied in Attachment 1. In summary, membership is now at 1772, and **we have the highest average long-term memberships ever. ("Long term" are memberships over one year duration). The average duration is now 4.63 years as opposed 3.31 in the year 2000.** This is viewed as a very good trend. The website plays a large part in registering memberships. Life members number 124 with 5 more on payment plan.

Fred Cooper is working on a membership brochure as part of a membership drive. The brochure is targeted on jumpers from the 50s and 60s.

Magazine update-Chuck Sheley

The July issue of the magazine went to layout last week. **It will be distributed before the reunion.** Chuck reminded us that one aim of NSA is to recover and record history. The magazine reflects that. Chuck plans interviews with pioneer jumpers in the near future, some of which will be conducted during the reunion.

The cost on magazine is going down. Cost of last issue is \$1.92, compared to the budget of \$2.39. This was accomplished by reducing by eight pages on last issue.

Website Report-Chuck Sheley

Chuck explained that the new website brings in about \$10,000 per year in merchandise more than the previous version. The new website is socketed so it can be routinely updated without wholesale revision. **Implementing the new website was accomplished with unbudgeted NSA funds, in the amount of \$17,000. However these expenses were warranted based on the revenue increase as described above.** Ron Stoleson underscored this positive aspect of the website and Chuck's performance. **The \$17,000 expenditure was indeed warranted.** Larry Lufkin said there was some confusion coming from the discussion of the McMinnville meeting so Chuck was responding to this condition.

Merchandise Report-Chuck Sheley

Since Chuck began the Merchandise Program, the NSA has realized \$265,242 gross with \$75,700 profit. Results of prior effort was \$13,100 gross with \$3264 profit.

Doug Houston asked about new ideas in merchandise. Some new ideas have been implemented but these haven't worked out well. Most of merchandise sales now isn't from jumpers. Top sellers on website are associate memberships then hats, then tee shirts. Life member shirts should be considered for sale. Starr Jenkins donated 35 copies of his book to NSA for sale. This is 100% profit.

The Smokejumper display at the Evergreen Museum will enhance merchandise sales further. Ron Stoleson asked if the MMF will sell NSA merchandise. It's likely that Stan Cohen would be interested in this.

Chuck stated that the reunion committee will sell a tee shirt and a cap each for \$10.00. This is poor margin. **The BOD will instruct the next reunion committee to have our Merchandising Department manage this effort.**

Stipend for Chuck Sheley-Ron Stoleson

The stipend determined by the BOD meeting in McMinnville in October of 2003 was not accepted by Chuck because it was defined as an "award". There is a lot of dissention about this issue. Fred Rohrbach stated that Chuck's contribution is essential and we should compensate him. **Ron Stoleson said that the decision was made as an award in McMinnville at the BOD meeting. If we want to change that, we should bring it to the board meeting in MSO in June 2004.** Dean Longanecker will place the \$6000 in the proposed budget. Doug Houston will lead development of the EXCOM position to be taken forward to the BOD regarding a stipend for Chuck.

Board of Directors Elections-Chuck Sheley

200 ballots have been returned thus far. This is the best slate that we have ever had. Chuck suggests that everyone that runs for the Board should be given a job even if they aren't elected.

NSA Exhibit Update-Bill Moody

Bill has met the Evergreen curator Ben Christie several times over the last few months to develop the exhibit. Bill's handout is provided as Attachment 2. Representation from the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management are included on the exhibit steering committee. The exhibit will be located in front of the Ford Tri Motor at the museum. Unveiling date is proposed as July 12, 2004 to coincide with the anniversary of the first fire jump July 12, 1940. Cost of exhibit is \$30-35,000. **NSA has contributed \$5000. Chuck Sheley donated \$6000 personally. There is still \$22,000 needed.** Evergreen will fund the remainder but will ask for NSA to support fund raising after the fact. A discussion followed regarding the potential for a split on sale of NSA merchandise at the museum gift shop concluded this is a possibility.

Bill feels that the NSA should agree to come up with the \$10,000 either by regaining the \$10,000 donation from the individual that retracted it, or by other means. The NSA position on this is that we are not obligated to further support. Bill recommends that a committee be appointed to pursue funding of between \$5-10,000, which could be a combination of sharing proceeds of merchandise, direct contribution, or other. Dean Longanecker reminded the group that there is currently about \$7000 in the NSA museum fund that was originally intended for the Forest Service Museum. A portion of this could be provided to Evergreen. **Action forward is for Ron Stoleson to pursue the Stimpson-Miller Foundation \$10,000 donation that had been offered, then retracted.**

Then if not successful, to develop a further action plan. Ronald L. Mundt is the decision maker for the foundation. John Blackwell (MSO 67) has great connections, and may be able to assist with the Stimpson-Miller Foundation.

Fred Rohrbach pledged to match an NSA donation of \$5000 for a total of \$10,000 if we are unsuccessful in getting the Stimpson –Miller contribution.

A committee was assigned to help plan the exhibit dedication which includes Doug Houston, Fred Cooper, and Joe Stutler.

NSA video update-Bill Moody

Steve Smith is reducing the length of the NSA two-hour video for other uses that will ultimately profit the NSA.

Ron Stoleson mentioned the need to supplement Steve's efforts with a historian with a strategic view for gathering all forms of historical materials.

Trails Program-Jon McBride

No new information. Nine projects lined up for the summer of 2004, 80+ NSA members in crews.

NSA Colorado Chapter - Doug Houston

Bill Ruskin spearheads the Colorado group. He has a bridge project and a trail project lined up, which are both coordinated with the NSA. **The October 2004 BOD meeting will be in Glenwood Springs on Saturday, 9 October.** There will do a memorial for

Storm King and South Canyon at that time, with representation by the NSA. The EXCOM consensus is to let Bill Ruskin lead the planning for the Memorials.

Reunion Status-Doug Houston/Larry Lufkin

Planning is moving well, and all activities are viable. Golf, fun run, raft trip, and the big dinner Saturday night. There will be a memorial service on Sunday morning. Chief of Forest Service will attend and participate. Bob Sallee, Mann Gulch survivor, will be the keynote speaker on Saturday night. President George Bush has been invited but has not accepted to date.

To date, 380 people have signed up so far for reunion. 700 is the break even point financially. As a point of reference, the Redding reunion had about 1000 attendees total. However, at this time prior to the Redding event registration there was at a similar count.

Folk Life Festival-Fred Cooper

NSA involvement is still viable. The plan for our program will be outlined this summer for submittal to the FS planners. The outline for NSA participation is a tent with a rigging table. A jump is also being considered which would be orchestrated by the Smithsonian. There is consideration for borrowing an exhibit, such as the Evergreen Museum exhibit.

NEW BUSINESS

Recognition-Doug Houston

Barry Hicks would like to have recognition for two BLM and FS directors. They were attempting to select a single model parachute for both services. The project has been put on hold because of rejection of a plan to test jump square parachutes in Silver City New Mexico. Recognition is for their effort to work together for the common good of both agencies. **John Helmer will prepare the text for the recognition.** The directors are Larry Hamilton BLM, Gerry Williamson FS.

Fred Brauer Honors-Ron Stoleson

Vance Warren wants to honor Fred Brauer at the reunion. He has put together a plaque that includes NSA. **Ron will present to Fred during the week of April 21, 2004.** Ron's suggestion is that NSA should consider honoring others of similar background. The EXCOM agreed, but no precedent is being set by so doing.

555 Association-Carl Gidlund

Carl Gidlund said that 555 Association will meet in Seattle Sept 5-8 2004. **Perhaps NSA should make a presentation there to honor first KIA Melvin Brown in the 555.**

Next Meeting

The next meeting is for the full BOD on Friday 18 June at the Holiday Inn in Missoula.